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GED attainment up 10 percent

A total of 10,294 Kentuckians earned GEDs in 2010-11, representing a 10 percent increase from the 9,357 diplomas awarded from the previous year. Not only did more students earn GEDs, the pass rate of test takers also increased from 80 percent to 83 percent.

Council on Postsecondary Education President Bob King said, “This is great news for Kentucky, and we applaud these graduates who are now better prepared for the workforce or to transition to college.”

Officials attribute the annual increase in GEDs to free testing offered during April, May and June as well as ongoing efforts by local adult education programs in all 120 counties.

“The free testing program was a huge success,” stated Reecie D. Stagnolia, vice president, KYAE. “Kentucky’s GED attainment numbers were actually lagging in March, so the free testing gave hundreds of Kentuckians the extra incentive they needed to earn their GED. We couldn’t be more pleased with their aspirations and achievements as well as the hard work by adult educators across the state in preparing adults to be successful.”

Kentucky Adult Education paid the \$55 test fee for test-takers during the three-month period.

In 11 years, 116,142 Kentuckians have earned a GED. Even with this progress, the numbers show the need is still great with 414,338 Kentuckians, or 15 percent of the working-age population age 18 to 64, lacking a high school credential or GED.

Legislature recognizes KYAE work

KYAE Vice President Reecie Stagnolia was part of a panel that presented to the Postsecondary Subcommittee of the General Assembly’s Interim Joint Committee on Education earlier this month. He was joined by Beth A. Brinly, Department of Workforce Investment commissioner, and Dr. Jay Box, KCTCS chancellor, to discuss “Closing Kentucky’s Workforce Skills Gap.”

As a result of the presentation, the House Speaker's office distributed a column to local newspapers to applaud the accomplishments of the KYAE system. Many of you may have already seen the article in your local newspapers; it is copied below.

FRANKFORT FOCUS

August 9, 2011

It has been a little more than a decade ago since the General Assembly revamped the state's adult education programs, a high point in the legislature's ongoing efforts to improve the classroom from preschool to the workplace.

While a lot of work remains, the past decade has been exactly what we had hoped. In fact, from 2005 to 2009, adult education enrollment grew by 30 percent – faster than any other state over the same period. There are now about 40,000 citizens who are helped academically each year.

One of the key programs offered by adult education is the GED. Since 2000, nearly 106,000 Kentuckians have received this diploma, which was 13th best nationally when measuring that as a percentage of the eligible population.

Just as the numbers of GED students are increasing, more are passing the test as well. The passing rate was about 70 percent in 2000 but now hovers around 80 percent. Of those taking the test, more than half are between 18 and 34, and about a third are between 34 and 64.

This fiscal year, which began last month, the state has set aside a little more than \$22 million. It's a figure that I think we will have to greatly increase if we are to help more Kentuckians go back to school. It's estimated there are still about 786,000 adults in the Commonwealth without a high school diploma or a GED, and more than a half-million of those are 64 or younger.

Those who return for their GED cannot only take pride in their accomplishment; they are also in line to see their income jump significantly, too. A 2007 report by the U.S. Census said the salary difference between those without a high school diploma and those who have one or its equivalency is \$8,700 a year.

For the 9,357 Kentuckians who got their GED in 2010, that's a potential \$2.4 billion bump in pay over a 30-year career. If we can get the number of graduates up to 15,000 annually – the goal adult education officials have set for 2020 – this number would rise by well over \$1 billion.

Not surprisingly, salaries increase even more for those who move on to college. About 20 percent of GED graduates do just that, with all but a handful staying relatively close to home at a KCTCS school.

Just as we want more citizens taking the GED, we also need more to go on to college. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics says that most jobs now require at least some postsecondary training, and by 2013 it's expected that 90 percent of the fastest-growing jobs will need it.

The easiest way to boost our college-bound numbers, of course, is to do all we can to lower the number of high school dropouts to begin with. It's something the Kentucky House has tried several times over the last couple of years by proposing to increase the dropout age from 16 to 18.

The need to do that became much clearer earlier this month, when education officials released a revised dropout figure that is designed to make comparisons with other states much easier. For the class of 2010, the latest year available, the graduation rate was 76 percent. In other words, one-fourth of the students in that class started high school but did not finish it. If there is a silver lining, it's that the 2010 rate was better than the two previous years that had been re-calculated under the new formula.

Another way we're getting more people into postsecondary school is Project Graduate. This was started several years ago by our public four-year universities, and it is designed to attract those Kentuckians who have at least 90 credit hours but had to leave school before getting their diploma.

The latest statistics show that almost 500 students re-enrolled through Project Graduate have completed that journey. Last fall and this past spring, hundreds of others were on the path to follow in their footsteps.

If getting a GED or college diploma is something you would like to see in your future, there are a couple of places where you can start. First, every county has adult-education programs that are a great resource. The state provides help online, too. Kentucky Adult Education's website is www.kyae.ky.gov, while www.knowhow2goky.org can also help with adult education as well as Project Graduate. Just click on "Adult" when you go there to find the latest information and available options.

KYAE policy reminder

In late June, KYAE distributed an e-mail outlining policy revisions for the 2011-12 fiscal year. In case you missed it, click [here](#) for the policy summary. The following topics are addressed – managed enrollment/new program design, performance and accountability, enrollment goals, GED targets, NRS performance measures, personnel requirements and professional development. The [2011-12 KYAE Policy and Procedure Manual](#) was posted July 1, 2011. If you have questions, please contact Janet Hoover at (502) 573-5114, ext. 110, or Janet.Hoover@ky.gov.

OVAE guidance on reallocation

KYAE has recently received guidance from the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), U.S. Department of Education, regarding a process that allows KYAE to reallocate county funding from one fiscal agent to another in certain circumstances. KYAE plans to use a reallocation process in the following circumstances:

- When a county is defunded for poor performance or other reasons or if a county voluntarily relinquishes its adult education grant, KYAE will seek a fiscal agent from among its approved provider network and reallocate the funding to that fiscal agent.
- In a statewide competitive RFP year, KYAE plans to use the reallocation process when a fiscal agent does not submit an approvable proposal, as determined by RFP review teams. In this circumstance, instead of conducting a re-bid process for that county, KYAE will solicit a fiscal agent from among those approved through the RFP process and reallocate the funding.

AERIN videos demo changes

KYAE has posted two videos to demonstrate changes and new features in AERIN. One spotlights revisions to the staff module; the other highlights AERIN's capability to create classes and track student data by classes. Find both videos at <http://kyae.ky.gov/educators/aerin.htm>.

KYAE marketing campaign making impact

Earlier this year, KYAE entered into an agreement with the Kentucky Broadcasters Association Public Education Partnership (PEP). With a membership fee paid through June 30, 2012, KYAE radio and TV spots are given priority in the rotation of public service announcements (PSAs) by TV and radio stations across the state. In the first four months, KYAE has received advertising valued above the cost of the annual membership fee.

Through PEP, KYAE is airing National Ad Council-produced TV spots and KYAE-produced radio spots. During May and June, the radio spots promoted free GED testing.

Below is a four-month summary of results.

Month	Media	Number of Spots	Advertising Value
March 2011	TV	150	\$12,366
April 2011	TV	200	\$17,505
May 2011	TV	338	\$23,699
May 2011	Radio	2,846	\$54,600
June 2011	TV	216	\$15,595
June 2011	Radio	5,028	\$83,717
TOTAL		8,778	\$207,482

KYAE provider network changes

As of July 1, 2011, the McLean County adult education program is administered by Owensboro Community and Technical College, which also oversees the programs in Daviess and Ohio counties. The previous McLean County fiscal agent, the McLean County Fiscal Court, opted to relinquish the grant.

The 2011-12 KYAE provider network consists of boards of education (55 counties), KCTCS (32 counties), educational co-ops (26 counties), universities (four counties) and community-based organizations (three counties).

Services for students with hearing disabilities

KYAE providers can arrange interpreting services for students with a hearing loss. The services are supported fiscally by postsecondary funding earmarked for Kentucky residents with a hearing loss; the funding is administered by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). OVR partners with the Center on Deafness and Hearing Loss at EKU to provide information and resources related to services for this population.

When students with hearing loss enroll in adult education, providers should contact Tricia Davis at the Center (tricia.davis@eku.edu) and Lori Bishop at OVR (lorit.bishop@ky.gov) so that the process is clearly established from the beginning.

Newspapers in Education discontinued

KYAE has discontinued its support of the Lexington Herald-Leader's Newspaper in Education program, which provided all KYAE programs with access to online resources and provided adult education centers in the newspaper's delivery area with newspaper delivery.

KYAE encourages programs to continue using newspapers as part of their instructional resources by using free online newspaper websites.

ACE article spotlights GED® changes

A recent issue of *The Presidency*, a publication of the American Council on Education, the developer of the GED tests, provides interesting background on the evolving GED tests, including changes that will take place over the next few years. Click [here](#) to read about how the GED Testing Service is developing a new, more rigorous test aligned to Common Core State Standards being implemented by KYAE through professional development beginning this fiscal year.

For the latest GEDTS updates, subscribe to [The Community](#), an e-newsletter.

Why adults need college – an economic argument

An excellent policy brief documenting the importance of adults completing college has been released by the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). *Not Just Kid Stuff Anymore: The Economic Imperative for More Adults to Complete College* can be accessed by clicking [here](#). The paper was written by Patrick Kelly, a former Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education staff member, and Julie Strawn.

Valuable resources – something for everyone!

LINCS resources

The Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) provides a myriad of valuable resources for adult educators. The list below spotlights recently released resources and materials. To visit the LINCS webpage and explore the full range of resources, click [here](#).

LINCS online PD modules

Four online professional development modules are available at no cost through LINCS. The modules are:

- Learning to Achieve: Accommodations is a 60- to 120-minute module about testing and instructional accommodations appropriate for individuals with learning disabilities.

- Learning to Achieve: Neuroscience is a 60- to 120-minute module about the neurobiology of learning in general as well as its application to learning disabilities.
- Learning to Achieve: A Professional's Guide to Educating Adults with Learning Disabilities is a 30- to 60-minute module providing an overview of the popular research-based online publication of the same title.
- Learning to Achieve: English Language Learners is a 60- to 120-minute module that identifies testing and instructional accommodation considerations for non-native English speakers.

Interested parties may register for the free online modules at: <http://mp.cls.utk.edu/>.

LINCS classroom and research resources

Each month *Collections News*, the LINCS newsletter, features one of the three *LINCS* Resource Collections — Basic Skills, Program Management and Workforce Competitiveness — and introduces research-based resources that you can use in your adult and family literacy programs and classrooms. Links to recent newsletters are below.

- [Workforce Competitiveness Collection](#), August 2011
- [Basic Skills Collection](#), July 2011
- [Program Management](#), June 2011

ESL resources

- Beginning August 1, 2011, CAL instituted a new pricing structure for BEST Plus and BEST Literacy. It is available by clicking [here](#).
- CAL has a new adult ESL education website at www.cal.org/adultesl. The website provides access to many free resources.
- CAL recently launched a free online PD module, *Developing Oral Proficiency of Adults Learning English*. Visit www.cal.org/adultspeak for more details.
- The CASAS download center provides presentations from the CASAS Summer Institute 2011. Click [here](#) to find interesting information on transitions, standards and technology.

Corrections education resources

The July edition of *The ABE Advisor* is chock full of resources for adult educators working in corrections settings. Click [here](#) to access *The ABE Advisor*, a newsletter produced by Wonderlic.

Adult educator-recommended resources

KYAE adult educators have recently recommended the following websites as good math resources:

- www.math.com
- www.aaamath.com
- www.coolmath.com
- www.brainpop.com
- www.highschoolhub.com
- www.aplusmath.com
- www.math-drills.com

-
- Matthew McDermott of the McCracken County Adult Education Program has built webpages with links to his favorite online resources. Check out:
 - For math resources, www.bilanliao.com/math.
 - For ESL resources, www.bilanliao.com/esl
 - For additional adult education resources, www.bilanliao.com/adulteducation

Multiple resources

GCF Learn Free, a website of the Goodwill Community Foundation, provides more than 1,000 lessons, videos and interactive resources on reading, math, computer basics and much, much more. Everything is free. Click [here](#) to explore.

KYAE's frequently updated Resources webpage has numerous resources on a wide variety of topics. Check it out by clicking [here](#).